

**MONTEREY PENINSULA REGIONAL PARK DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**

DATE: September 02, 2020
TO: Board of Directors
FROM: Rafael Payan, General Manager
SUBJECT: Monthly Staff Report

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

That the Board accept and file this report. This report is for information only and does not require further action.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Not applicable.

FUNDING SOURCE:

Not applicable.

FUNDING BALANCE:

Not applicable.

DISCUSSION:

The following summarizes some of the key tasks and projects MPRPD's personnel undertook from mid-July through the end of August 2020 in addition to performing the District's regular business. By concurrently providing this information to the Public and Board, transparency is assured regarding these matters.

Staff reports are listed by Division. Division Leads will gladly respond to the Board's questions.

This work was accomplished in compliance with the State's and County's shelter-in-place orders.

ADMINISTRATION DIVISION

- 1. Contracts:** Staff began researching and participating in demonstrations of online RFP/Bidding documents, vendor management, and contract management programs. This online resource will allow staff better access and administration of projects, requests for proposals, bidding processes, and contracts. This is critical particularly during the COVID-19 restrictions, requiring staff to work remotely and lacking access to hard copy files. Staff will provide an additional update to the Board at a future meeting.

- 2. COVID-related Orders, Meetings, and Updates:** Staff continued to participate in regular meetings held by the County Office of Emergency Services and County Health Officer to ensure we have the latest information, and that planning and implementation practices align MPRPD with the CDC's, State's, and County's latest guidelines.

Dr. Moreno – Monterey County's Health Officer and his medical team, held a session that specifically focused on parks, recreation, and open space agencies. A summary of Dr. Moreno's instructions, which are based on the State's orders, includes:

- A. Indoor pools and spas remain closed;
 - B. Dog parks can be opened but must comply with the States' Orders;
 - C. Children over 2-years of age should wear a mask -- but DO NOT force young children to wear a mask if they refuse to keep it on;
 - D. Playground equipment continues to remain closed. If tape and signs get torn-down, try snow fence;
 - E. The State is not currently working on a process to re-open playgrounds;
 - F. Sports are not authorized if they entail drills, practices, or games that require the sharing of equipment or the touching of folks not from the same household.
 - G. Spartan and large group/team training is not allowed wherein the participants do not wear masks throughout the course of the event;
 - H. Groups travel, such as van and car-pooling that includes members that are not from the same household is prohibited;
 - I. Avoid school-based or school-like activities outside of school, including school team practices and activities outside of school (...in other words, do not replicate what schools are doing, providing, or would otherwise provide.)
 - J. No indoor training, drills, practices, games, or activities;
 - K. The County will periodically issue updated responses to FAQs on the Health Department's website, based on the State's Orders;
 - L. The County can be more restrictive than the State if it chooses to be so but cannot be more lenient than the State's Orders.
 - M. We must be careful to not confuse the public at our sites and facilities. For instance, a parks department may cause confusion and invite public outrage if that department allows tennis but does not allow volleyball or allows baseball/softball but not soccer or basketball. The best position to adopt, at this time is, if more than one person has to touch a ball, bat, piece of equipment, or cannot maintain social distancing, or consistently wear a face covering while engaged in that activity, do not engage in, or allow, that activity.
- 3. Grants:** Staff participated in a mandatory PROPOSITION 68 grant workshop to begin the process of applying for the District's \$400,000 award. Staff is also reviewing the grant program's requirements to determine the most suitable MPRPD projects that may qualify for these funds.

4. **Joyce Stevens Monterey Pine Preserve Monument Sign:** Operations and Administration Staff transported and installed the sign at the subject project site. Stuccoing of the sign has been initiated. The region's recent wildfires and poor air quality slowed the project's progress by approximately two-weeks. Staff continues to meet with Architect Stevens to plan a dedication ceremony. A date has not yet been determined but it is anticipated the event will take place in September 2020.

5. **Laguna Grande Regional Park:** The City of Monterey and MPRPD (Selection Committee) are in the process of identifying a date to hold candidate-firm interviews. The selected firm will provide planning, design, and environmental services for the proposed project. This trail and site maintenance and enhancement project will focus primarily on the southern and eastern portions of the park. Once a firm has been identified by the project's Selection Committee, a recommendation to enter an agreement with said firm will be presented to the JPA for its consideration and action. The site's analysis and planning will ensue shortly thereafter. Updates will be provided to the Board as this project advances into design, maintenance, and construction.

6. **ParkIT! Staging Area Concept Plan:** Ops staff identified the northeast corner of the extant Rancho Canada Unit parking lot as the best location for the proposed *ParkIT!* staging area at the Palo Corona Regional Park Rancho Canada Unit. This location will minimize user conflicts between Palo Corona Regional Park's hikers, Wedgewood's patrons, and *ParkIT!* shuttle bus users. Administration staff's rendering shows that this site also provides an opportunity to increase the number of *ParkIT!* patron parking spaces, which presently total 25 proposed sites, without negative impact to the proposed dog park and its users. This schematic will be incorporated into Project-A's Concept Plan and scope.



7. **Policies (revising & new):** Staff continues to review existing policies and procedures and identify necessary updates and revisions. Policies and procedures

that will benefit MPRPD and our public service delivery but are not currently ratified are being researched and will continue to be presented to the Board for its consideration as drafts are developed.

8. **Return-to-Work Plan (RTW):** Staff continues the development of an RTW. This plan is required to safely reopen MPRPD facilities and worksites. The RTW cannot be implemented until related policies and procedures are in place, and the state's and county's guidelines permit reopening. The following lists required components and processes:
 - A. **Policies, Protocols, and Checklists:** Currently being developed, along with acquiring the necessary PPE, social distancing and sanitizing plans, supplies, etc. Because COVID-related science is still evolving, guidance is changing thus, policies will be presented for the Board's approval in the coming months as guidance at the national, state, and local levels align.
 - B. **State:** Currently on Stage 2 of 4 of Resilience Roadmap. Per current Stage 2 guidelines, offices may RTW, "when telework is not possible."
 - C. **County:** Currently in early Stage 3 of 4 of Resilience Roadmap, but remains on State's Monitoring List, where "offices for non-critical infrastructure sectors" must close indoor operations. MPRPD has designated some "essential employees" that perform office work.
9. **Roof Replacement Project and Mechanical Systems Serving the Rancho Canada Unit's Office Complex and Events Center (formerly known as the "Clubhouse"):** MPRPD is seeking system upgrades and/or replacement of the extant heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) units located on this structure's multi-level roofs. The extant HVAC system serves MPRPD's and our concessionaire's offices, the Discovery Center, two banquet rooms, the pub, and commercial kitchen.

Roof Consulting Services (RCS), our roofing consultant, recommended that a mechanical engineering assessment of the existing air conditioning and heating systems be conducted to determine current and future needs, and identify potential efficiencies. System upgrades to the HVAC may be completed as a separate project or in conjunction with the roof replacement project.

Four firms, including local firms, were contacted to provide a mechanical engineering feasibility study to determine what actions shall be incorporated with the HVAC repair or replacement project. The only response for the Office and Event Center's mechanical engineering assessment was submitted by 3C Engineering. This firm is also on the Project-A subconsultant team. 3C's findings and recommendations report will include the scope items identified and requested by RCS. 3C's proposal addresses MPRPD's main concerns with the HVAC systems. This Professional Services Agreement is for \$4,500.

10. Roof Replacement Project and Structural Engineering: RCS completed their roof assessment and identified nine locations as deficient. These deficiencies include, wood beams suffering from dry rot on the building's exterior. RCS recommended that these beams be inspected by a structural engineer and repaired, according to their recommendations, during the clay tile roof's replacement.

Six firms were contacted, including local firms, to provide structural engineering services related to the replacement of the roof at the Rancho Canada Unit's Office and Event Center. Three responses were received. MPRPD selected Biggs Cardosa Associates, Inc., Structural Engineers. This structural engineering firm provides a two-phase approach regarding assessment and bid documents. They provided an additional explanation of their approach and suggested a possible process modification which may save some funding. They are on the sub-consultant team for Ten Over Studio on Project-A and are familiar with the site and its structures. They also have a good understanding of the scope of the project and desired outcomes. This Professional Services Agreement is for \$10,000.

11. Solar Panels at PCR P RCU: Staff explored the potential of installing a solar array on the former clubhouse roof as a component of the reroofing project. Staff's research yielded that because solar technology is evolving, it may be prudent to install an array where it can be easily accessed and modified as needed. By installing the panels behind the site's maintenance shop on an elevated structure, the solar array can also serve as a Rangers' MPRPD vehicles shade structure. The maintenance building will provide some visual screening without impacting the array's function. The behind-the-shop configuration also makes it easier to maintain the array without the potential of causing roof damage during the array's maintenance. The inclusion of the solar array behind the maintenance shop will be included in Project-A's scope.

12. Strategic Plan: The project's consultant and staff discussed this document's content. The 2020-2024/25 Strategic Plan will include COVID-19, social equity, and climate change-related recommendations.

13. Training Continued: COVID-19, Worker's Compensation, and Finance were the primary topics.

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION & OUTREACH DIVISION

1. Education Partners and Reaching Hundreds During the Pandemic: Santa Lucia Conservancy (SLC) Environmental Education staff requested access to the PCR P Discovery Center (DC) to photograph and film artifacts. The ability to film artifacts, allows the SLC to introduce hundreds of students and their families to MPRPD's parks and the PCR P-DC.

Films and photographs will be used digitally by SLC for their school outreach and classroom education programs, keeping children connected with our region's natural and cultural heritage. The module will focus on the indigenous people of the area, including the Rumsen, Mutsun and Esselen cultures, and is scheduled to launch in the coming weeks.

In response to the pandemic, SLC has conducted 28 zoom-style classes and created numerous videos for school children and adults. The content has primarily been distributed to public schools in Carmel Valley, Carmel, Pacific Grove, Monterey, and Salinas. The story of the region's indigenous people includes a welcome to the Discovery Center presented by MPRPD staff. This is an example of a successful collaboration with our partners, and reinforces MPRPD's relevance in providing science centers, parks, open spaces, and trails to our communities' members – especially those offering school programs.

- 2. Fiscal Year Goals Refined:** In addition to developing an operating budget each fiscal year, MPRPD's divisions also creates annual goals aligned with the District's mission and current strategic plan. During the month of July, the EECO Division's goals were reviewed, reevaluated, reprioritized, and modified to accommodate for COVID and social distancing. EECO staff also selected leads for each project.
- 3. Let's Go Outdoors! (LGO!) Newsletter:** In place of the *LGO!* Adventure Activities Guide, staff will produce an *LGO!* Newsletter scheduled to be mailed to all District residents in mid-October. The content is still under review and includes topics such as: the Joyce Stevens Monterey Pine Forest Preserve, Your Social Distancing Keeps Our Parks Open, Rangers are our Heroes, Frog Pond Wetland Preserve, Snowy Plovers at Marina Dunes Preserve, Meet the Board Director in your Ward.
- 4. Professional Development – Interpretation:**
 - A.** Staff and Interpretive Master Plan Core Team members completed a six-week course given by the National Network for Ocean and Climate Change Interpretation (NNOCCI) learning tested methods on presenting the processes of climate change to broad audiences. The course provided skills for staff to better explain climate change and its causes, and tools to increase visitors' understanding through solutions-based outcomes.
 - B.** Staff participated in a two-day BaySci Virtual Open Space conference hosted by The Lawrence Hall of Science, UC Berkeley (BEETLES) to discuss challenges, resources, and solutions to outdoor learning in the COVID era. This conference was attended by nearly four-hundred environmental educators and teachers.
- 5. Public Outreach/Social Media:** Staff continues to research technology to connect the public and volunteers to parks and open spaces.

A. Facebook stats - @MPRegionalParkDistrict:

- August 13 follower count: 1288 ▼
- New followers since July 13th: 0
- Post reach: People reached at least once
- June 15 – July 13 average: 461 views per post
- July 13 – August 13 average: 329 ▼ views per post

B. Reactions, Comments, Shares

Reactions:

- June 15 – July 13 average: 13 reactions per post
- July 13 – August 13 average: 12 ▼ reactions per post

Comments:

- June 15 – July 13 average: 2 comments per post
- July 13 – August 13 average: 3 ▲ comment per post

Shares:

- June 15 – July 13 average: 3 shares per post
- July 13 – August 13 average: 2 ▼ share per post
- Top 3 most popular posts: July 13 – August 13
 - July 20 Rattlesnake sighting! (3.3k views)
 - August 4 Black bears (1.6k views)
 - August 11 Perseid meteor shower (1.2k views)

- 6. Service Learning at CSUMB:** Each year, MPRPD works with CSUMB to offer university students service-learning (SL) projects. As the only public university in California to make service learning a graduation requirement for all undergraduate students, CSUMB provides the opportunity for thousands of students each semester promote social responsibility and build community by partnering with local organizations.

This year, the EECO Division staff developed three service-learning opportunities for CSUMB students to complete remotely. They are:

- A.** Improving communication resources for park users (Savannah Peña- Lead);
- B.** Making MPRPD’s website more accessible to a variety of audiences (Debbie Wyatt-Lead); and,
- C.** Creating sustainability and “carbon footprint” interpretive materials introducing the cause/impacts of climate change and ways to become involved in local community efforts (Megan Mason-Lead).

- 7. Volunteers:** Keeping engaged is a high priority for staff and volunteers while being physically separated due to the pandemic. Core Staff and Volunteers met via the zoom virtual platform on July 23 to discuss environmental education exhibits, park updates, and future goals. A vital event, these enrichment events give volunteers and staff the opportunity to connect while seeing each other and checking-in.

Volunteers received their August 2020 Volunteer Newsletter which included an update on the native plant-related test propagation treatments, technique, and research being done in the Rewilding Project at Palo Corona Regional Park's Rancho Unit by volunteer Scott Hennessy. A spotlight article on volunteer Steve Ibrahim, and volunteer recognition for the virtual Wildflower Show as well as inclusion of the staff reports to keep our volunteers informed on what is happening at MPRPD's Parks and Open Spaces was also included (**ATTACHMENT 1**).

OPERATIONS DIVISION

- 1. Carmel Fire:** Cal Fire continues to investigate the cause of the Carmel Fire at the fire's point of origin. Staff will continue to work alongside Cal Fire with this incident's investigation.



- 2. Former Clubhouse Repairs and Related Projects:** Rangers will be performing project management services for Project-B and the Clubhouse roof replacement project. Rangers will be the "boots-on-the-ground" Construction Project Managers and will participate in each aspect of these projects from design through construction completion. Rangers are also addressing building deficiencies as they become apparent and making repairs/improvements as needed.

3. COVID-19 Pandemic Response:

- A. Rangers continue to report a significant increase in visitation to MPRPD's Parks and Preserves, particularly on weekends and Holidays. The weekend of August 15 was especially busy due to the excessive heat wave that hit California. Rangers continue to work a limited staffing scheduling, practice social distancing, and wear masks to help prevent the spread of the Coronavirus.
- B. MPRPD's playgrounds and ball fields remain closed to the public in compliance with County and State officials' orders.
- C. Seasonal footbridges across the Carmel River will not be installed this year to accommodate social distancing.

4. **Fern Falls Bridges:** Rangers Nico de Paolo and Jeff Niewenhuis replaced two (2) aged, dilapidated footbridges along the Fern Falls Trail at Garland Ranch Regional Park. The old bridges were constructed using split redwood which becomes extremely slippery when wet. The new bridges are constructed using 3" redwood decking and handrails on both sides.



BEFORE



AFTER

5. Joyce Steven Monterey Pine Preserve Monument Sign:

- A.** Rangers John Palaniuk and Hatton Vandervort oversee the concrete pour after constructing the form for the sign's slab.



- B.** Rangers Jacob Sanderson and Hatton Vandervort and General Manager Rafael Payan install the sign on the finished slab.



- 8. Emergency Responses:** Ranger Jeff Niewenhuis assisted Monterey County Regional Fire District with a medical emergency that occurred on Sky Trail at Garland Park. After hearing of the injured hiker, Ranger Niewenhuis located and led paramedics to the patient. MCRFD utilized the Utility Vehicle purchased by MPRPD for their use. The prior week, Ranger Joseph Narvaez helped locate an injured hiker on Vasquez Trail.
- 9. Mowing/Brushing at Rancho Canada Unit:** Rangers worked with the Gabilan Conservation Camp Inmate Crew to cut back the encroaching brush along the Southbank Trail. Inmate crews are becoming less available due to the

Governor's order to release inmates early to prevent the spread of Covid-19 within California's penitentiaries.

Ventana Forestry completed another round of mowing at the Rancho Canada Unit, in conjunction with Rangers and oversight by the Audubon Society to ensure nesting birds were not harmed during this process.



ATTACHMENT:

1. [August 2020 Volunteer Newsletter](#)